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E.O. 12958: DECL: 01/13/2019
TAGS: [PGOV](#) [PREL](#) [NATO](#) [MARR](#) [TU](#)
SUBJECT: TURKISH PARTICIPATION IN NATO ALLIANCE GROUND
SURVEILLANCE (AGS) PROGRAM

Classified By: EUR Acting Deputy Assistant Secretary Bridget Brink
for reasons 1.4 (b) and (d).

¶1. (U) This is an urgent action request for Embassy Ankara.
See para 8.

¶2. (C) Background: In July 2008, NATO released the draft Program Memorandum of Understanding (PMOU) to participating Allies, including Turkey, for national staffing and approval. At the October 2008 Conference of National Armaments Directors (CNAD) meeting, most AGS nations, including the United States, indicated willingness to sign the AGS PMOU. At that meeting the Turkish representative indicated that Turkey needed clarification on a number of unresolved issues before it could begin staffing the PMOU. These include selection of an AGS Main Operating Base (MOB), NATO funding for in-service support and infrastructure costs, and industrial participation.

¶3. (C) Since that time, Allies have agreed to common fund (less France) AGS support and infrastructure costs; annual support costs are estimated at 70 million euro. In addition, in December, SecGen de Hoop Scheffer formally proposed to select Sigonella, Italy as the location of the AGS MOB. The selection of Sigonella was based on thorough Military Committee and International Staff analysis that gave great weight to collocation of NATO AGS with other Global Hawk or derivative systems at a basing location. The United States plans on basing its own Global Hawk operations at Sigonella by 2010, and substantial U.S.-funded infrastructure enhancements at this location are underway. The presence of this infrastructure, in addition to host nation support provided by Italy, will greatly reduce the need for NATO-funded enhancements at Sigonella. The silence period on the NATO basing decision ends on 1600 (CET) on Friday 16 January.

¶4. (C) With regard to industrial participation, the Turkish firm Milsoft is a member of the AGS team as a subcontractor to the U.S. lead, Northrop Grumman Corporation (NGC). Milsoft is a certified engineer firm focused on software development. Its subcontract with NGC will focus on systems engineering services and software design development and integration. NGC estimates that this work package will fully satisfy Turkey's work share requirements and may exceed the targeted value of 70-80 percent of Turkey's 35 Million euro AGS cost share. The head of MoD Turkey's acquisition organization, Murad Bayar, has expressed satisfaction with these industrial participation arrangements.

¶6. (C) Just before Christmas, Spain (90 Million euro cost share) formally withdrew from the program. Though unfortunate from a political perspective, both NATO staff and NGC believe that they can deliver required AGS capability with no net increase in cost to remaining participants by eliminating desirable but not essential program features.

¶7. (U) Objectives: (a) Reemphasize U.S. desire that Turkey remain in the AGS program and accept Sigonella as the AGS basing location without giving the impression that Turkey now holds a veto over the program; and (b) Underscore political and industrial benefits of Turkey's participation in the program.

¶8. (U) Action Request: Post is requested to deliver the talking points below before 1200 on 14 January 2009 Washington time and report host government response. We understand that NATO International Staff is providing additional information concerning the process and criteria that led to the recommendation to select Sigonella as the AGS MOB.

¶9. (U) Talking Points:

A) Spanish decision to withdraw from AGS is unfortunate, but the U.S. believes the program can go forward without its participation; NATO still needs AGS.

B) We need to move forward on a basing decision and Program MOU signature early this year. Turkish participation in the program will bring valuable benefits to Turkish industry as well as consideration by SHAPE for a possible future support role for Corlu, Turkey (though not as MOB).

C) Once AGS is fielded, its support and infrastructure costs will be common funded at 25 (soon to be 27) nations.

D) Military Committee Working Group and the NATO International Staff conducted a rigorous assessment of AGS MOB candidates which considered all factors, including additional support provided by Host Nations; that assessment ranked Sigonella as the most beneficial location for NATO, primarily because of the extent of existing infrastructure and synergies with other planned Global Hawk operations at that location. The United States is confident that NATO fairly considered and assessed all basing candidates.

E) A NATO AGS capability will benefit Turkish (and other NATO) troops in places such as Afghanistan.

F) In light of the benefits that will result from your involvement in AGS, we encourage your continued participation in this program.

¶10. (U) Please direct requests for further information and slug cables to OSD Policy ISA-NATO George Sinks and to State EUR/RPM R. Chris Davy.
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